

all the details of the science of war or government compared with the building up, on clear and well-defined principles, abstract as well as tangible, those stupendous and imperishable memorials of a country's history which the works of the Architect and the Building Artificer supply. After the lapse of ages of obscurity, we recover, by means of the indelible tracings of the hand of the long departed, a knowledge of the habits, character, and condition of the countries in which they lived and worked. How much of the tale of British history of the fourteenth century, and of following centuries, have to be recorded by the architect and builder of these days! and by those whom their present conduct will influence? How important then it is that there should be none of the trifling in our department, and that we should be alive to the importance of the functions we are called upon to exercise.

The humblest workman of the building class is charged with the duties of the same mission. It will be our part to shew them how this duty was discharged in times gone by, and to engage them in the consideration of such subjects, and in the labour of acquiring a similar mastery in their craft with those whose works we call upon them to join us in investigating.

It is thus that we propose to educate—the standard of mechanical and moral excellence must be raised at the same time, and good citizens, as well as able artisans and artists, be trained under one system and together.

OUR CORRESPONDENCE.

It is a pleasing part of our duty to acknowledge the flattering testimonials we have received in favour of our work. Certain of our approving friends have taken the trouble to write, but many more have called at the office, and expressed the warmest interest in the success of *THE BUILDER*, with a determination to do all in their power to insure it. The Royal Institute of British Architects have, by a special resolution, directed their Honorary Secretary (Mr. Bailey) to acknowledge the reception of our first number, and the Society of Arts have placed it in their library, and thanked us for the presentation. These matters are noted as shewing that a work of this class is recognized by important public bodies as deserving of their special regard; and we feel assured that as we advance we shall find not only an admission but a welcome to every public and private library in which the literature of art obtains a place.

We have letters of encomium from architects as well as from builders and workmen; and as it is for the latter that we are most anxious, feeling assured that when matters are right at the base of the social structure, the ornaments are firmly fixed and supported, so we feel the greater pride in perceiving the interest which the workman takes in our labours. It is the architect, however, and the experienced and liberal master builder, the clerk of works, and foreman, who can assist us to the enlightening of the body of the craft; and we have one grateful specimen of this species of co-operation, from a learned and eminent architect, an extract from which we cannot forbear committing to print.

"I should like to know whether *THE BUILDER* will assume the character of *London's Magazine*, or whether you intend it entirely for the working classes—if for the latter, shall you endeavor to bring before them the principles of what they are called upon to labour at, or shall you endeavor to give them a taste for those requirements which at present are supposed to be possessed by those who direct them? I do not fear any ill from raising the mental condition of the artisan, but am much grieved, at the same time, to feel the difficulty of elevating the social condition of so large a mass of the community, and am therefore that when the attempt is made, it should be followed by success.

"To inform the working classes how their labour was performed in ancient days, would be a most interesting and useful work, and one which I should be glad to see published. I will ignore the publisher's

employment—describe the tools, the style of setting out and executing roofs of the middle ages, where neither iron-work nor nails of any kind were employed. The scarring, the manner of uniting the timbers, &c. &c., are all at variance with modern practice. Then the beautiful manner, in which the whole is put together and balanced would be a study calculated to raise him in his own estimation, and satisfy him that he belonged to a superior class of artificers. Emulation would encourage him to do as well or better, to carry the same excellence into minor employments, or, at all events, to understand sufficient to derive pleasure from the examination of many of the specimens left us. A sermon deal might be written upon the mere handicraft—much more upon the principles—more still upon the art; and when the design is taken up, the field is too spacious to put bounds to."

The foregoing so well expresses many of our views, that we can hardly encumber it by a comment. We have in another place given our own opinions on the question of "raising the mental condition of the artisan," and we have also in the same paper attempted to sketch out by what means and for what end we propose to raise it. We shall, therefore, proceed to the letter of another architect, which as it regards the "getting up," as it is termed, of the paper, has a practical value in that sense, and will enable us to explain a point or two in reference to it, that may give satisfaction to many.

"Sir, "As you have invited opinions of your precursor number of *THE BUILDER*, I take the liberty, as an architect, to express my gratification at the publication of so useful and desirable a periodical, and have very little doubt, if continued as promised in the address, of its becoming a work of great circulation, and one which will effect much benefit to the numerous classes connected with the building art, more particularly to the workman, providing you publish it at a price within his means, for at present, it is much to be regretted, this great class of persons are wholly denied the advantages derived by perusal of works on this science, owing to the high price at which they are from necessity published. I would therefore suggest you give this the fullest consideration, as I feel space will be too high to give *THE BUILDER* the circulation you desire. Another point requiring attention will be as to the advertisements, both as to quantity and description. If general advertisements are received, it will not so well admit of the title you give to the paper, which should exclude many such as are in the Precursor; and without much less space is devoted, or the number of advertisements is compressed by smaller type, you will experience a disappointment in the success of your undertaking. I again beg you will accept the thanks and best wishes of an

"Antichrist."

Now as to price, we think the best answer we can give is the present number. We have been advised to steer clear of too low a price at the commencement, because of the admitted difficulty of alteration in such cases, when found necessary to raise it. We hope no such necessity will arise in this; that the largeness of the subscription-list and of the number of purchasers will fully compensate us for any sacrifice we may make in the outset. With regard to advertisements, it was our wish to confine the list to such as bore directly on building, but to be stringent in this respect would be to deprive the paper of a large power of usefulness. Builders want almost every thing, and are consumers to an immense amount of all sorts of commodities; wherefore, then, should we refuse our columns to advertisements that inform the workman and the master alike of the ready means of supplying their general daily wants? But we make this promise, that the space given to advertisements shall not defraud the inquiring reader of his full share of information and of matter of trade interest: nor shall our friends the advertisers be treated with less consideration by this resolve—the more they bestow their largess upon us, the more shall we study to cater for their advantage, and for every page they add to our sheet we shall in some way or other give a penny to the reader, so that the mutual workings of both parties shall be for the mutual good.

We give the next letter, though of some length, entire. It like the first from which we made an extract, embodies so much of our views and plans, that we would give Mr. Harvey the full credit of his own clear perceptions, by letting it be seen how well he understands the principles which we have laid down, and how exemplified in the carrying out.

"Sir, "The general invitation conveyed through the 'precursor number' has induced me to offer a few remarks in reference to *THE BUILDER*.

"The discovery of the disease is half the cure; so in this instance, the primary point to ascertain is, what class stands most in need of the kind of publication contemplated in *THE BUILDER*. Where the vast number directly and indirectly connected with building and mechanical pursuits is considered, there is certainly much cause for encouragement in such a project; at all events, it may be fairly concluded that there is a good side; and if the foundation be well studied, there is but little fear of erecting a durable structure.

"I have no doubt that *THE BUILDER* may be rendered worthy the patronage of all the numerous grades named in the list given in the 'precursor number'; but bearing in mind 'the old man and his son,' I am of opinion, that out of these several grades, some particular class should be specially borne in view, and that upon the selection of this class mainly depends the success of *THE BUILDER*.

"Upon a review of such literary works extant as may be deemed the property of the body to whom *THE BUILDER* is addressed, I think it will be found that no class of men so well provided for as fourteenth-century mechanics generally, and this is the class that I would recommend to your preference in the conduct of *THE BUILDER*; to this class *THE BUILDER* ought to be considered invaluable in the dissemination of practical knowledge,—extracts from works made inaccessible by their cost,—experiments,—hints on construction,—design,—enrichments,—and similar topics; which at the same time would be very acceptable to the more enlightened portion of the building community, and produce inquiry and improvement in the minds of the less experienced and youthful.

"With this view but little will be expected or required of *THE BUILDER* in the character of a newspaper. Further than the limited notice of occurrences appertaining to its title, I would suggest the insertion of the market, or current prices of building materials, &c. &c., and in particular, that an allotted space be given up to the subjects just referred to, to the exclusion of advertisements or any other matter. Probably once a fortnight might suffice for such a work; this point, however, with its price, I will not now enter upon, having already, I fear, trespassed too long on your attention.

"Be assured of my interest in the success of *THE BUILDER*; to the aid of which my humble tribute will be given with much pleasure.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"SIDNEY HARVEY."

The next letter is from a plasterer, and we make it the occasion of reiterating our intention to give designs of ornaments for plasterers. There is a field of novelty and propriety open to them which we venture to say has scarcely yet been touched upon. Hitherto architectural ornament in plaster-work has been principally confined to imitations of marble or stone-work and wood. Now this is a perversion and a deception, and a better principle will inevitably obtain, since just and sound views of the principles of design and ornament are beginning to be inculcated. So beautifully plastic a material has its own peculiar province in decoration, and we shall take occasion, as we advance, to throw out practical suggestions for ascertaining and working in it.

"Sir, "It is with much satisfaction I have read the precursor of *THE BUILDER*, which I think will be well received by all persons in that line of business, for nothing can possibly be so much wanted for the trade in general as a publication of the sort you are about to send into the world. I have been a practical plasterer these thirty years, and have often expressed a wish that a useful intelligent paper might be published. I shall be most happy to become a subscriber. I am fearful there will be thousands read the Precursor, like myself, that will be proud to subscribe, but will not take the trouble to express themselves by letter, and then you may fancy it will not be taken up with spirit, though I am convinced, by the many persons, in brief all, that I have conferred with, that it is their intention to become purchasers the moment it is fairly out. Wishing you success,

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"B. J. MARRALL."

We will insert two more of what we may term the professional, and conclude with a complimentary note, lately received, from a gentleman whom we have not the pleasure of knowing, and extracts from the first that came to hand, as proofs, along with a great number of others, of a deep interest being taken in *THE BUILDER*, as we predicted would be the case, by the amateur.